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THE

AMERICAN FLAG.



ITS

ORIGIN AND HISTORY.

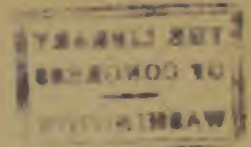
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J. C. JULIUS LANGBEIN.

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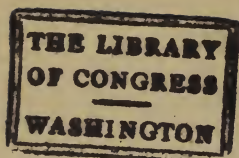
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PREFACE.

NEITHER preface nor apology is necessary to introduce to the American People, at any time, but more especially during the Centennial Year of their Republic, a theme so thoroughly American in feeling and sentiment as the origin and history of the American Flag.

The subject is so purely a production of American talent and genius, that the Author proudly and confidently issues it forth at this time, not only to Americans, but to all Nationalities.

THE AMERICAN FLAG.

ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY.

" O, say can you see, by the dawns early light,
When so proudly we watched for the twilight's last gleaming,
The stripes and bright stars through the perilous flight,
And the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming ;
And the rocket's red glare, as the bombs burst in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,
O, say does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

IN every age, and in every state of society, whether ancient or modern, Nations have had recourse to war, either as a necessity, or as a pursuit. Everywhere and at all times, the strong have sought by means of their brute strength and force of numbers, to impose upon the weak ; and in return the weak, by superior skill and discipline, have striven to overcome that strength and force; hence the necessity of wars.

The poetries, the histories, the orations of antiquity, all resound with the clang of arms, their grandest heart-bursts dwelling rather upon the rough actions of war and rapine, than upon the gentler arts and lovelier graces of peace. The Old Testament teems with the narration of brave exploits and deeds of heroic enterprise by patriots of Israel, while the New Testament, inspired by the life and teachings of our meek and suffering Redeemer, often selects the soldier and his weapons to tipify and illustrate heroism and duty, apart from the

world, its vanities and strifes. Hence, "as such things must needs be," we recognize in war, a profession—honorable and glorious if its cause is right and just, and also a necessity that when war was actively undertaken, it should be so under some banner whose swaying folds could be seen by the host, as the central point upon which they must rally—signalling to them victory, defeat, or doubtful issue, according as it was advanced or drawn back, or momentarily eclipsed. Sometimes it might have been but the penion of a leader, and was only a rallying signal to one particular faction of the army, but gradually from that developing into one common flag or banner, around which his followers might gather when he himself was lost to their sight amid the din and conflict of the strife ; and so it has become a habit or custom among nations and bodies of men, when they unite with the intention of holding themselves out to the world as a separate nation, or body, to establish for themselves an ensign or standard, with a certain device or devices thereon, emblematical of their traits, habits, courage, or aspirations, and by which it or they may be recognized and distinguished.

We read of banners and ensigns constantly throughout the Old Testament, and the most ancient allusion upon this subject may be found in the fourth book of Moses, called Numbers, first chapter and fifty-second verse, where is recorded what may rightfully be considered a divine sanction, and where we are told that during the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness, the Lord commanded Moses to tell them that "they shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard throughout the hosts ;" and in the second chapter of the same book, second verse, the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to order every man of the children of Israel "to pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of his father's house;" and in the third verse of the same chapter, it seems He ordered that, "on the east side, toward the rising of the sun, shall they of the standard of the tribe of Judah pitch throughout their armies." It seems the various standards of the tribes were pitched each under different captains ; and in the forty-ninth chapter of the book of Genesis, we are informed of the different insignias that the Twelve Tribes bore upon their banners.

The records of the Egyptians—those strange people, in whose doings and customs an interest has only lately been taken, show evidences of such a custom having prevailed among them, when in hostile ar-

ray the mighty armies of Pharoah advanced upon the invader, or they themselves spread their conquests over neighboring territories. The ancient Persians also adopted ensigns at a very early date, as explorations go to prove ; and the Greek historian, Xenophon, mentions in the celebrated raid which he records of the handful of Greek warriors, who penetrated that empire by an almost unexampled prowess, that a great number of standards were captured by the enemy. He likewise describes the royal standard of Persia to have been a golden eagle raised on a spear or pole, while that of the Greek Republic of Athens was the figure of an animal fixed upon the end of a spear, as if impaled—an emblem of that cruelty, which, in a greater or less extent, is characteristic of warfare. The Greecio-Egyptian standard resembled a round-headed knife. The Gauls, to stimulate the courage of their army, are said to have carried around with them some fierce animal, such as a lion or bear, or other sanguinary brute.

The military standards of the Romans were different from the flags, colors and ensigns of modern warfare and of our own times ; they were carvings in wood, with an eagle or some other figure elevated at the end of a tall lance or pole. Their various forms are only known to us by the representations of them on medals. The first one was very insignificant ; it was simply a bundle of hay or straw, to show that they had been, or might be threshed or withered, yet, nevertheless, the seed could spring up and bear fruit. They afterwards bore a wolf, probably to memorialize the manner in which Romulus was nurtured in his childhood. Subsequently they bore a cross, above which was a hand and below an oval shield, upon which were represented warlike deities adopted from the Grecians. They finally adopted the eagle, which they continue to bear.

The Norman rovers of the sea had banners, and it is recorded that, in 878, Alfred the Great, of England, captured a very celebrated standard of the Danes, called "The Raven." Under their banners much pillage, rapine, and blood, was freely scattered over the western shores of the Eastern world, and victory never perched upon them without fearful suffering to those whom they attacked ; so that a glimpse of their banners, as seen from the land as they appeared in the distant offing, was generally a signal for flight, and always one for commotion.

The Emperor Constantine, who fixed his seat of government upon the western shore of the Byzantium, who was surnamed "The Great,"

it is said, was, on the eve of battle, when suddenly there appeared to him a luminous standard in the sky, in the form of a cross, with the legend underneath, "*In hoc signo vinces*;" "In this sign thou conquerest;" which sign was, of course, immediately adopted, and a favorable issue of his cause followed. When Waldemar the Second, of Denmark, was engaged in a great battle with the Livonians (1219), it is also said that a sacred banner fell from heaven in the midst of the host, which revived the drooping spirits of his followers, so that they were victorious; in memory of which event Waldemar instituted an order of knighthood called "The Danneborg," or, "The Strength of the Danes," at present the highest order of honor that the Danish monarch can invest him whom he delights to honor.

The first banner in England of which we have any notice, was borne by the followers of Augustine at the interview he had with Ethelbert. They were described as bearing banners, upon which were displayed silver crosses and the picture of Christ. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the banners were very large and fastened upon long poles, more like the mast of a ship than a modern flagstaff, as carried in front of a command. This was fixed upon a platform and carried in a car drawn by oxen. At the base of this pole was a small altar, where was stationed a priest, who celebrated mass each day, and ten knights, who attended with as many trumpets at their command, keeping watch around it night and day. At Coton Moor, in the year 638, such a cumbersome machine was used in what is known as the Battle of the Standard. Here, erected on a wagon, as described, and placed in the centre of the English army, were displayed the standard of St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverly, and St. Wilfred of Ripon, three very powerful saints at that time, and at the top of the mast which held them forth to the army was a little casket containing a consecrated host, so denominated.

The great importance attached to banners, in warlike times, was as we see supplemented in the middle ages by the sanction and sacredness of the Church. Further, they formed at that time also, to a very great extent, a connecting link between the laity and the clergy, inasmuch as a great part of the warlike demonstrations of the time was undertaken in the name of religion, having not merely the sanction of the Church upon them, but holding its interests before them as the grand object of attainment. The Crusades were grand military *exordia* of the Church in which the banners of her advancing hosts were consecra-

ted by rite and by symbol to her service, and held enchained the energies of their followers. The religious sentiment it was which animated the most powerful military bodies of that day struggling against the enemies of a common faith. The contest was represented as it was recognized as being by the Crescent and the Cross—Christ and Mahomet.

We are told that the Knights Templars carried with them a standard which they called "Beauseant," which is described as being simply divisions of black and white, with the symbolical rendering of the white, peace to their friends ; of the black, ill to their foes : their war-cry being identical with the name of their banner. In the monasteries and other religious retreats it was customary for the monks to preserve for occasions the flags and banners used by them. "The Gonfalon" was the banner of the Roman Catholic Church, and was carried in the Pope's army. "The Gonfalonier," or standard-bearer being a high State official in rank and emoluments of office.

The flag of the celebrated Abbey of St. Dennis was called the Ori-flame, from the Latin *aurum*, gold, and *flama*, a flame. It was composed of a piece of red taffeta fixed on a golden spear, and cut into three joints, each of which was adorned with a tassel of green silk. When Louis Le Gros marched against the Emperor, Henry the Fifth, in the year 1124, he took along with him this banner, and from that time for nearly three centuries the French monarchs were in the habit, on the commencement of a war, of receiving this banner from the hands of the Abbot of St. Dennis, to whose care it was again returned at the close of hostilities. It is said to have been borne for the last time at the battle of Montherry, which occurred on the 14th day of July, 1465.

Later in the history of nations the banner acquired other uses and peculiar significance from the orders, the houses, or the governments that adopted it. At length, as consolidated governments absorbed all lesser independencies, banners became chiefly significant of national authority. Thus, in our day, each people and nation have their flag, and no civilized community to-day, nor any semi-civilized or even barbarous one, on the face of the earth is without it.

Some of the most lofty ideas are embodied on the banners of a nation : duty, self-sacrifice, daring, freedom, right and determination of purpose, and by and through symbols of this kind, appealing through the portico of a mystery, as it were, mankind have, whether consciously or unconsciously, moved toward their greatest achievements ; these ages

being always marked as pre-eminent which are most apt in reading worth by its symbolisms and valor by its signs. A soldier's fidelity to his flag has in it a large attribute of the sublime, that supernal influence which towers aloft in majesty over all circumstances of time or place, and amid the grandeur of nature impresses us with awe : for what shines forth most in the conditions of the *immortal* but this element, which is a constituent part of the heroic, holding forth to it likewise that immortality which in the eyes of mortals shines in fadeless lustre. It is his flag that seems to impart to the soldier not only his share in the national life it represents, but, also, an identity with it. Tattered, shot-torn, and smoke blackened, it may be, nevertheless to him it is a symbol of the highest value and importance—and more than a symbol—an engine with power to direct his thoughts and to concentrate his emotions so that a mighty host becomes grouped to him as one man, only a principle and idea having life before him. Its very rags and tatters are made glorious with memories of achievements and with the history of past successes. A nation's past is shadowed in its folds, and bright memories of victory and of duty heroically performed, flash around it as the lightnings of heaven round the iron-bound point of a conductor ; or perhaps some recollections live in its drooping folds of a day of defeat and disaster, or of a time of oppression and suffering, and the rustle of these may beget sadness in the heart of the listener, but whichever way it may be that the soldier feels moved, yet the hot blood throbs at his heart and the battle-light reddens on his brow, as he gazes upon it, till again he feels ready, if needs be, to fight in its defence. The passion which arises in the heart of the soldier for his flag is beautifully illustrated in a story told of a young Prussian soldier, whom the First Napoleon observed among the wounded, pressing his flag to his bosom. "Gentlemen," said the Emperor, kindling at the sight, and addressing his staff, "you see that a soldier has a sentiment approaching idolatry for his flag. It is the object of his worship, as a present from his mistress. Render funeral honors at once to this young man. I regret that I do not know his name, that I might write to his family. Do not take away his flag, its silken folds will be an honorable shroud for him."

In our own country the gifted and lamented Andrew Johnson, who was so faithful to his country in a time of great trial, beautifully yet sadly, though eloquently illustrated this passion for the American flag. In the course of a speech in Congress during the war, he said :

“Sir, I intend to stand by that Flag, and by the Union of which it is the emblem. I have been told, and I have heard it repeated, that this Union is gone. It has been said in this chamber that it is in the cold sweat of death, that in fact it is really dead, and merely lying in state, waiting for the funeral obsequies to be performed. If this is so, and the war that has been made upon me in consequence of advocating the Constitution and the Union is to result in my overthrow and destruction, and that flag, that glorious flag, the emblem of the Union, which was borne by Washington through a seven years struggle, shall be struck from the Capitol and trailed in the dust, when this Union is interred, *I want no more honorable winding sheet than that brave old Flag, and no more glorious grave than to be interred in the tomb of the Union.*” These were brave words to be uttered by Andrew Johnson or any one else at the time they were spoken, and the American people admire and honor him and revere his memory for them.

To an imaginative and reflective mind, when a nation's flag is seen, the very nation itself is presented : and whatever the particular insignia, he reads chiefly in it the government, the principles, the truths, the history, the life which belongs to that nation. When the tricolors of France waive forth on the breeze, we see the Republic of France. When the Union-jack is displayed, we behold Great Britain. When the new-found banner of Italy is unfurled, we see before us resurrected Italy, and the presence of that greatest of patriots, the red-shirted Garibaldi.

When the black white and red horizontal bars are seen, we know that the German Empire is represented. When a triangular flag, the hypotenuse of which extends from the top of the staff, to the top of the flag is seen in yellow with a large diamond, we know that China is represented. When a blood red flag, with a full grown white moon is seen, then Morocco is distinguished. When a blue white and blue bar with the sun in the centre of the white bar is displayed, we behold the Argentine Republic, and when a red flag with a Maltese cross is seen, we behold Switzerland. But it is not alone the piece of bunting we behold, that is the least in our thoughts ; it is the *principles* which it represents, that is in reality its real object, its sign and symbol.

Having thus briefly sketched the history and traditions of flags and banners, we now come to the “Star Spangled Banner” itself, our own glorious national ensign, *the old flag*. How its very name thrills the

heart, fires the soul, and nerves the arm : *the Stars and Stripes ! the Flag of Liberty ! the Banner of the Skies !*

“ Our country’s flag with lines of blood,
Forever telling as it waves :
How side by side our father’s stood,
And died to plant it o’er their graves.”

“ Before us rose and with us grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue,
Of these bright colors each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign,
For Freedom’s hand hath blended them
Like tints in an immortal gem.

“ One tint is of the sunbeam’s dyes,
One the blue depth of seraph’s eyes,
One the pure spirit’s veil of white,
Has robed in radiance of its light :
The three so mingled do besem
The texture of an heavenly dream.”

God bless its memories and forever protect it from enemies, whether on sea or on shore, within the sacred precincts of its home, or wherever the winds of propitious heaven may bear it. May the hand of the traitor that dares to pull it down be forever palsied, and the tongue of the miscreant who would dare defame it, forever cleave to the roof of his mouth ; for the Union, of which it is the emblem, was established by our noble forefathers, and cemented with their blood. To us have they confided the lofty trust of guarding and upholding it. What obligation can be more binding upon us, or more sacred to our lives. For over three-quarters of a century it has commanded the respect of all nations and races on land and sea, wherever the traces of civilization have appeared ; penetrating the darkest recesses of earth, and carrying with it new aspirations towards life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. No other flag in the world is the herald of so glorious a message, or comes on an errand of such blissful import to humanity, offering a home and an asylum to the oppressed everywhere.

Its greatest glory is, that it throws the folds of its protection over the humblest and weakest of its people, and vindicates the rights of the poor and powerless, as faithfully as those of the rich and powerful ; and the stars upon it are to enslaved and oppressed nations the bright morning stars of heaven, and the stripes upon it are the beams of morning light ; as at early dawn the stars shine forth even as it grows light,

and then the sun advances, that light breakes into streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together, and ribbing the horizon with its bright bars, so, *the dear old flag*, its stars and beams of many colored lights shine out together, and, wherever this flag comes, and men behold it, they see in its sacred folds no ramping lion, no ferocious wolf, no embattled castle, or insignia of imperial autocratic authority, but they see the symbol of light. It is the banner of dawn. It means *Liberty, Freedom, Equality*; and the galley-slave, the poor, oppressed conscript, the trodden-down creature of foreign despotism, sees in the American flag the Mecca of his hopes.

When Freedom from her mountain height
 Unfurled her standard to the air,
 She tore the azure robes of night
 And set the stars of glory there.

She mingled with her gorgeous dyes
 The milky baldrick of the skies,
 And stripped its pure celestial white
 With streakings of the morning light.
 Then from her mansion in the sun,
 She called her eagle bearer down,
 And gave unto his mighty hand
 The symbol of her chosen land!

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
 Who rearest aloft thy regal form,
 To bear the tempest-trumpings loud,
 And see the lightning lances driven,
 Where stride the warriors of the storm
 And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
 Child of the Sun, to thee 'tis given,
 To guard the banner of the free,
 To wend away the battle stroke,
 And bid its blendings shine upon,
 Like rainbow in the clouds of war,
 The harbinger of victory!

Flag of the brave, thy folds shall fly
 The sign of hope and triumph high,

When speaks the signal trumpet-tone,
 And the long line comes gleaming on,
 Ere yet the life-blood warm and wet
 Has dimm'd the glistening bayonet.

Each soldier's eye still brightly turns
 To where the sky-born glories burn,
 And as his springing steps advance,
 Catch war and vengeance from the glance ;
 And when the cannon-mouthing loud
 Heaves in wild wreaths the battle-shroud,
 And glory salvos raise and fall
 Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
 Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
 And cowering foes shall sink beneath
 Each gallant arm that strikes below,
 That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas ! On ocean wave
 Thy stars shall glitter on the brave,
 When Death careering on the gale
 Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail.
 And frightened waves rush wildly back
 Before the broadside's reeling rack.
 Each dying wanderer of the sea
 Shall look at once to Heaven and thee,
 And smile to see thy splendors fly,
 In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
 By angel hands to valor given,
 Thy stars have lit the welkin dome
 And all thy hues were born in heaven.
 Forever float that standard sheet,
 Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
 With freedom's soil beneath our feet
 And freedom's banner streaming o'er us !

Are these magnificent lines to be taken as mere flowery rhetoric, without practical bearing in sense or application ? Is it to be regarded as mere bombast ? God forbid.

The world at large can never grow weary of listening to rhapsodies composed on a subject such as this, nor can it grow weary in the task of tracing the progress of that American liberty which shall one day, as surely as the bright sun shines aloft, become the possession of all mankind.

Little more than two centuries ago, a band of pilgrims crossed the ocean, to find in a wild and foreign shore, that refuge which they vainly sought in their own land for freedom of thought and of action ; yet sad to relate, but even to Plymouth Rock the old spirit pursued them.

Our blood, even yet, fires with indignation when we remember by what measures of tyranny and oppression the mother country actually *drove* her colonies to adopt a course which seemed an almost desperate one ; but it was the only alternative, or they must have let that principle perish which had grown as the fibre of their hearts and became a part of themselves. None understood their fearful alternative better, or regarded it with more respect and admiration than Lord Chatham, who in his celebrated speech in the British Parliament, in praise of the American Congress assembled at Philadelphia, made use of the following remarkable language : “When your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America ; when you consider their decency, firmness and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself I must declare and avow that in all my readings and observations, and it has been my favorite study—I have read Thucydids and have admired and studied the master spirits of the world—I say I must declare that, for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the general Congress of Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be fatal.”

The strength of centuries was in the old flint lock muskets and rusty words of our forefathers ; the ragged continental army fought the fight of the world—the battle of millions—of all nations ; it was the struggle of millions by a few thousands ; a single drop of that long-wished-for stream for whose waters the earth panted : the stream of Liberty !

And the heart and soul of the people of all nations were with us. The grave of the martyred Kosciusco is made of a handful of earth

from every battle-field of long suffering Poland. So was our monument of freedom cemented by the blood of almost every people. France sent us her noble, chivalrous young Lafayette. Poland her patriotic Kosciusko. Germany her lion-hearted Baron Stuben and De-Kalb. Scotland her Mercer and her Sterling. Thus was the precious jewel of freedom, so often lost and so often found, so often washed by the priceless blood of heroes, so often dimmed by the prejudices of men, saved once more.

“The starry flag, ’neath which they fought,
On many a bloody day,
From their old graves shall rouse them not,
For they have passed away.”

What is this solemn sound we hear?
It breaks upon a nation’s ear
Like ocean’s sob upon the shore.
The wail of storms whose wrath is o’er;
From every lofty mountain grand
It swells and rolls through all our land.

A country mourning o’er its slain,
Who gave their lives—and not in vain—
Since in its heart their mem’ry blooms
Fresh as these flowers upon their tombs;
Their toil is o’er, their labors cease,
In war they died—but died for peace.

They bravely fought and nobly fell,
And Fame their glorious deeds shall tell;
Where she decrees a crown of bay
No power on earth her hand can stay,
And on these graves a wreath is laid
No storm can change, no time can fade.

Where she has placed this deathless crown
Let woman cast her roses down,
And love and Fame together stand,
A guard of honor hand in hand,
Around these graves where heroes lie
Who fought for right, nor feared to die.

De Soto, a wild knight-errant, once sallied forth with a band of adventurers to find the spring of eternal life and youth ; whoever drank of its waters would never die, and the old should grow young and beautiful again. He did not discover it, however, never thinking that the country he sought it in, contained the spring after all ; and behold ! it was found by a handful of pilgrims from a strange land ; the ever fresh spring of whose water the weary nations of the earth shall come to drink, and grow young again, and never die ; the refreshing, sparkling fountain of liberty, in our own beloved land and under our own starry banner.

“ Our country first, our glory and our pride,
Land of our hopes ; land where our fathers died,
When in the right, we'll keep thy honor bright ;
When in the wrong, we'll die to set it right.”

The first step taken by a newly-formed nation, after perfecting the scheme of its internal organization, is to adopt some symbolic device which shall serve to distinguish its representatives in their intercourse with the outside world, and in the east end of the main building at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia is a design of the progressive manner in which our National Flag was evolved out of the multitude of heraldic suggestions furnished by the American Colonies, which formed the original confederation. It certainly represents a brilliant and splendid “*trophy*.”

The central device suggests the well-known idea of the poet Drake, of the “azure robe of night” in which Freedom “placed the stars of glory” in constructing the American Flag. That the gleaming of the starry baldric over the bivouacs of our Revolutionary forefathers suggested ideas of the twilight of a glorious future which was to arise from their patriotic efforts may be readily imagined, and some fancy that the conception of our flag was produced in that poetic manner. But opinions vary on this point. There is a striking coincidence between its design and the coat-of-arms of General Washington, which consisted of three stars in the upper portion, and three bars running across the escutcheon, and it is thought by some that the flag was derived from this heraldic design.

On the fourth day of July, 1776, that immortal document, *The Declaration of Independence*, was heralded forth, foreboding doom and disaster to tyrants. For more than a year, the colonies had been at

war with the mother country, but until this time there had been no American flag, no national ensign, and before the adoption of the present national flag, a variety of banners were borne by our colonial ancestors as emblematic of their combination in resistance to tyranny. The flag of the mother country still covered us as during all our colonial period, and each State that so chose had a separate and significant State banner. The battle of Breeds of Bunker Hill (as it was called), strange as it may seem, was fought under a red flag by the Continental troops bearing the motto, "come if you dare." In march, 1775, a Union flag with a red field was hoisted in New York, bearing the inscription on one side of "George Rex and the Liberties of America," and upon the reverse, "No Popery." General Israel Putnam raised, on Prospect Hill, July 18th, 1775, a flag bearing on one side a motto of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, "*Qui transtulit sustinet*," on the other, "An Appeal to Heaven"—an appeal well taken and amply sustained. In October, 1775, the floating batteries of Boston bore a flag with the latter motto, and a pine-tree upon a white field, with the Massachusetts emblem. Some of the Colonies used, in 1775, a flag with a rattlesnake coiled as if about to strike, and the motto, "Don't tread on me." The London *Chronicle*, an anti-ministerial paper, in its issue of January, 1776, describes as follows the flag of a captured American cruiseship: "In the Admiralty Office is the flag of a Provincial privateer. The field is white bunting; on the middle is a green pine-tree, and upon the opposite side is the motto 'An appeal to Heaven.'"

On the first of January, 1776, the new Continental army was organized, and on that day, for the first time, the grand Union flag of thirteen stripes was unfurled in the American camp at Cambridge. This flag bore the device of the English *Union*, which distinguishes the Royal standard of Great Britain, comprising the cross of St. George to denote England, and St. Andrew's cross to denote Scotland. It is said that some of the British regulars made the great mistake of supposing it was a token of submission to the King, whose speech had just been sent to the Americans. The British *Register*, of 1776, says: They—the rebels—burnt the King's speech, and changed their colors from a plain, to a flag with thirteen stripes, as a symbol of the number and union of the Colonies." A letter from Boston, published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, in 1776, says: "The Union flag was raised on the 2d; a compliment to the United Colonies."

These various flags, the pine-tree, the rattlesnake, and the stripes,

were used according to the tastes of the patriots until June 14th, 1777, when within a few days of one year after the Declaration of Independence, and two years and more after the war began, upon the 14th day of June of that year, the congress of the colonies assembled, and by an act then passed, it was enacted and ordained, "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, and that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field," thus representing a new constellation. The combination of the two colors, white and red, was probably suggested by the red flags of the army and the white flags of the navy, previously in use. The red color, also, which in Roman days was the signal of defence, denoted daring, and the white purity. The form of the stripes was suggested by Washington himself; "that officers of different grades should wear stripes of different colors." It is not definitely known who suggested the stars to represent the Union, but the credit is generally given to John Adams, the second President of the United States, who was then Chairman of the Board of War, as it was then called.

The resolution of June 14th was announced to the public at large on the 3d of September following, and at the surrender of the British General, Burgoyne, which occurred in the following October, the new flag streamed in the breeze and graced that memorable triumph of the infant Republic. On that occasion the thirteen stars were arranged in a circle, as we now often see them, in order to better express the idea of the union of the States.

It was not until Ireland, in 1801, was made an integral part of the British Kingdom, that the present flag of Great Britain, so well known as the Union Jack, was completed; but it was probably the ancient flag of that country that formed the basis of our American banner. Various flags had, indeed, at different times, been raised by our colonial ancestors, but they were not particularly associated with, or at least were not incorporated into the destined stars and stripes. It was only after Washington had assumed command of a fresh army of the Revolution, at Cambridge, January 2d, 1778, that he unfolded before them the new flag of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, having on one of its corners the red and white crosses of St. George and St. Andrew on a field of blue. This was the standard which was borne into the city of Boston when it was evacuated by the British troops, and was taken possession of by the American Army. Uniting, as it thus did, the flags of Britain and America, it showed that the colonists

were not yet prepared to sever the tie that bound them to their Mother country. By that union of flags they claimed to be still a vital and substantial part of the Empire of Great Britain, and demanded the rights and privileges which such a relation implied. Yet it was by these thirteen stripes that they made known the union also of the thirteen colonies ; the stars of which declared the purity and innocence of their cause, and the stripes of red giving forth defiance to cruelty and oppression.

On the 13th of January, 1794, there having been two more States added to the Union, it was enacted by Congress, "That from and after the 1st of May, 1795, the flag of the United States shall be fifteen stripes, alternate red and white, and that the Union be fifteen stars, white in a blue field." The flag, as thus altered and enlarged, was the one which was borne throughout all the contest, upon land and at sea, of the war of 1812. Subsequently it was thought that the flag would at length become too large and unwieldy to carry, if a new stripe should be added with every freshly admitted State; it was therefore enacted, on the fourth of April, 1818, "That from and after the fourth of July next, the flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white ; that the Union be twenty stars, white, in a blue field ; that on the admission of a new State into the Union, one star alone be added to the Union of the flag ; and that such addition shall take effect on the fourth day of July next succeeding such admission. Thus the flag would symbol the Union, as it might be at any period of its history, and also as it was in the very hour of its birth. It was at the same time suggested that these stars, instead of being arranged in a circle, be formed into the shape of a single star, a suggestion which we, in our day only occasionally see adopted. In fine, no particular order seems at present to prevail with respect to the arrangement of the constellation. It seems to be decided as enough upon that azure field, the red as emblematic of love, the white of purity, and the blue of fidelity, perseverance, vigilance and justice, each star signifying the glory of the State represented, and the whole to be eloquent forever of a union that must, in the very nature of things, be one and inseparable.

The emblematic significance of the flag has been thus explained : "The blue field, like the banner of the Covenanters, showed the league of the Colonies against oppression, and like the broad blue canopy of heaven, and the deep blue ocean wide, typified universal be-

nevolence, friendship and liberty, From the constellation Lyra, meaning harmony, was taken the idea of the stars, which, arranged in a circle emblematic of eternity, symbolized the perpetuity of the Union, while the number and arrangement of the stripes signified the number of the States ; their subordination to the Union, and equality among themselves. The red, symbol of zeal and courage, and the white, emblematic of purity, showed the fervency and justice of their purpose." How full of symbolic eloquence is that beautiful banner—representative of a nation unequaled for rapidity and immensity of growth and accomplishments, its power for good or evil, and lessons of human greatness ! Union, harmony, equality, perpetuity, justice, courage, purity, resistance to oppression, and subordination to legal and just rule, are portrayed in its gleaming folds.

Thus was the glorious national flag we now hold and defend, devised and ordained. It was then advanced to the world, as it now is, as the Flag of Liberty. It was no holiday toy, gorgeously bedecked with gilt and tinsel to catch the favor of the vain. It was a solemn National emblem, symbolic of the holy truths and purposes which brought together the old Colonial American Congress, and which has held together all the Congresses that have succeeded them.

The progress of our Republic has been little short of a miracle. One hundred years ago we were a people numbering only three millions. Now we number more than forty millions. Our industries were confined almost exclusively to the tilage of the soil. Now manufactories absorb much of the labor of the country. Our liberties remain unimpaired. The bondsmen have been freed from slavery. We have become possessed of the respect, if not the friendship, of all civilized nations. Our progress has been great in all the arts, in science, agriculture, commerce, navigation, mining, mechanics, law, medicine, etc. And in general education the progress is likewise encouraging. Our thirteen States have become thirty-eight, and eight Territories, including the Indian Territory and Alaska, making a territory extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the south we have extended to the Gulf of Mexico, and in the west from the Mississippi to the Pacific. One hundred years ago the cotton gin, the steam-ship, the rail-road, the telegraph, the reaping, sowing, and modern printing machines, and numerous other inventions of scarcely less value to our business and happiness, were entirely unknown. In 1776 manufactories scarcely existed even in name in all this vast territory. In 1870 more than

two million of persons were employed in manufactories, producing more than two billion one hundred million dollars of products in amount annually—nearly equal to our national debt. From nearly the whole of the population in 1776 being engaged in that one occupation of agriculture, in 1870, so numerous and diversified had become the occupations of our people that less than six millions out of more than forty millions were so engaged. The extraordinary effect produced in our country by a resort to diversified occupations has built a market for the products of fertile lands distant from the seaboard, and the markets of the world. The American system of locating various and extensive manufactories next to the plow and the pasture, and adding connecting railroads and steamboats, has produced in our distant interior country a result noticeable by the intelligent parts of all commercial nations. The ingenuity and skill of American mechanics have been demonstrated at home and abroad in a manner most flattering to their pride. But for the extraordinary genius and ability of our mechanics, the achievements of our agriculturists, manufacture and transportation throughout the country would have been impossible of attainment. The progress of the miner has also been great. Of coal our production was small; now many millions of tons are mined annually. So with Iron, which formed scarcely an appreciable part of our products half a century ago, we now produce more than the world consumed at the beginning of our national existence. Lead, zinc, and copper, from being articles of import, we may expect to be large exporters of in the near future. The development of gold and silver mines in the United States and Territories has not only been remarkable, but has had a large influence upon the business of all commercial nations. Our merchants in the last hundred years have had a success, and have established a reputation for enterprise, sagacity, progress, and integrity unsurpassed by the people of older nationalities. This “good name” is not confined to their homes, but goes out upon every sea and into every port where commerce enters.

Never was there since time began such a bound from comparative insignificance to substantial greatness. Our story as a nation is the very romance of history in this respect. Our trackless wilderness exhibits the phenomenon of galaxies ripening into star gems, and as each resplendant centre radiates forth other spheres, and pours its lustre towards the common centre. all shadows of the past may well flee away, all darkness, in which tribes and races are fearfully waiting

may well be searched and rifted. Meantime how grand the spectacle of Republics bound in one divisionless unit. Though the rebellion, like Lucifer, trailed a third part of its States behind its crimson chariot, their fall, thank God, was not like Lucifer's, "Never to rise again! Already they have arisen; already they have glittered through the marsh of gory dust that dimmed their lustre; they have again beamed with old celestial brilliancy. It was a stormy midnight that obscured them; but the blue ether is around them once more, and the heavens of reconstruction have reclaimed them."

"The tree
Whose drooping branches, one by one take root
Until the forest hides the parent stem.
Symbols the rise of empires—yet for ours
Affords no parallel. Its bursting seeds
Were scattered broadcast by the hand of God.
Behold the increase; where on every side,
From the blue mountains to the bounding main,
Nestling in valleys, dotting fertile plains;
And on the hill-sides shining, crowned with spires,
Our cities rise; while down a hundred streams
Our inland fleets speed laden to the sea.
Behold the lakes, where once the frail canoe
Timidly coasted; lo! from port to port,
Trailing their smoky penions through the sky,
The mighty steamers surging.

In each zone
That belts the earth, our star-lit banner shines,
And every glare sends forth to every shore
As home returns our freighted argosies!"

Let us now consider for a moment the names of those who devised and originated our National banner—the Rutleges, the Pinkneys, the Jays, the Franklins, the Hamiltons, the Jeffersons, the Adamses. These men were all officially connected with it, or consulted concerning it. They were men who had taken their lives in their hands and consecrated all their possessions—for what? For the doctrines and for the personal fact of liberty, for the right of all mankind to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, They had just given forth to

the world a declaration of truth and faith out of which sprang the great constitution of our land and upon which they planted this new devised flag of our Union.

The first instance in which the Stars and Stripes were unfurled was when the Brig Nancy was chartered by the Continental Congress to procure military stores in the West Indies, during the latter part of 1775. While at Porto Rico in July of the ensuing year, the information came that the Colonists had declared their independence, and with this information came the description of the flag that had been accepted as the national banner. A young man, Captain Thomas Manderville, set to work to make one, and successfully accomplished it. The flag was unfurled and saluted with thirteen guns. When the Brig Nancy was upon her return voyage, she was hemmed in by British vessels off Cape May, her officers succeeded in removing all the munitions to the shore, and when the last boat put off, a young man in it, John Hancock, jumped into the sea, swam to the vessel, ran up the shrouds of the mast and securing the flag, brought it triumphantly to the shore, amid the hot fire from a British Man-of-war.

The first American flag, however, according to the design and approval of Congress, was made by Mrs. Elizabeth Ross, of Philadelphia, the city in which liberty was proclaimed; the birthplace of American Independence. Three of her daughters still live to confirm this fact, founding their belief, not upon what they saw, for it was made many years before they were born, but upon what their mothers had often told them. A niece of this lady, Mrs. Margaret Boggs, aged ninety-five years, now lives in Germantown, and is conversant of the fact. The fact is not generally known that not only to Philadelphia belongs the honor of flinging the first star-spangled banner to the breeze, but to a Philadelphia lady belongs the honour of having made it. The house in which it was made still stands, No. 239 Arch street, (the old No. being 80) the last of an old row. It is related that when Congress had decided upon the design, Col. George Ross and Gen. Washington visited Mrs. Ross and asked her to make it, she said, "I don't know whether I can, but I'll try," and directly suggested to the gentlemen that the design was wrong, in that the stars were six cornered, and not five cornered as they should be. This was corrected. she made the flag, Congress accepted it, and for half a dozen years this lady furnished the Government with all its national flags, having,

of course a large assistance.

of course, a large assistance. This lady was the wife of Claypole, one of the lineal decedents of Oliver Cromwell.

The number and meaning of stars properly placed on our flag are briefly and correctly described by the *Philadelphia Ledger*. It says: "The stars represent States of the Union. There are now thirty-eight States, and the United States flag of to day bears thirty-eight stars, representing the thirty-eight States of the Union at the close of the first century of Independence. There is not even a remote probability that any more States will be admitted this year, and there is no excuse for putting on a greater number. Forty stars are put on for supposed convenience of arrangement in cross-rows of five stars each; but a much better arrangement can be made with thirty-eight stars, arranged in five rows, of which the central and two outer rows are made up of eight stars and the alternate rows of seven stars.

Who will deny it, when I assert that our glorious banner, our stars and stripes, is the most beautiful emblem that streams upon any land or floats upon any sea? Its proportions when properly made are perfect, it being just one-half as broad as it is long, and contains seven red and six white stripes of equal breadth, the first and last being red. The blue field for the stars is the width and square of the first seven stripes. This is called "The Union" and its prototype is pointed to in the constellation known as the "Lyre," signifying harmony. The remainder of the flag is designated "the fly."

Aside from regimental standards, guidons and guide markers, there are prescribed for the use of the United States troops three different sizes of national colors. The garrison flag, which is the largest, is thirty-six feet long by twenty feet deep, is made of bunting, has thirteen stripes (horizontal), seven of which are red and six white. In the upper quarter section next the staff is the "Union," composed of white stars, equal in number to the states, on a blue field one-third the length of the entire flag. This flag is expensive and not in general use at the military stations on the Indian frontier, where the greater portion of the army is distributed. The next in dimensions and importance is the storm flag, which takes the place of the other during the prevalence of high winds. It is twenty feet by ten on the staff, and in other particulars proportioned as, and similar to the garrison flag. The recruiting flag, the last of the three referred to, is nine feet nine inches long, by four feet four inches wide, and similar in other respects to the other two. Perhaps the most graceful proportions are

those prescribed for the regimental standard, six feet six inches fly by six feet on the pike; the pike including ferule and spear, being nine feet ten inches long. Each regiment has two, one of which is the national and the other the regimental colors. They are of silk, with yellow fringe, and with cords and tassels, for infantry of blue and white silk intermixed, and for artillery red and yellow.

The artillery regimental colors are yellow, with two crossed cannon in the centre, with the letters "U. S." above and the number of the regiment below, in a scroll in silk embroidery. The infantry are blue, with an eagle in the centre, and otherwise the same as artillery. The cavalry standard is like the infantry, except that it is five feet five inches wide, two feet three inches on the lance—which is nine feet in length—and has no cords and tassels. Each company of cavalry carries a swallow-tailed silk guidon, three feet five inches long to the point of tails, fifteen inches to the fork, and two feet two inches deep, on a lance nine feet long. Until recently the upper half was red and the lower half white; now they are national colors. Camp markers are eighteen inches square, white for infantry and red for artillery, on poles eight feet in length.

There is likewise, in regard to the origin of the flag, a somewhat poetical account given—referring to the times of the Solemn League and Covenant in Scotland, when the blue vault of heaven and the justice of their cause, there appealed to by the persecuted followers of duty furnished the first hint of that splendid device; but it is thought that this is mainly a poetical fancy. The old flag of Scotland forming the groundwork of the present British was the Silver cross of St. Andrew upon a blue field, over which is now placed first the flag of St. Patrick in somewhat mutilated form, and then the red cross of St. George. As before stated probably the example furnished our forefathers with some suggestions on the subject, and if so, the flag of Scotland—the same that the Covenanters used with some additions upon it, must have had an influence upon their imaginations in forming the American flag, but did not, of course, have any more than this. It must be admitted that there is considerable beauty in the idea that ascribes the origin of our flag to the natural aspect of the starry heavens as at night revealed to those whose only canopy was the sky, whose only covert, caves and secret holes was in the earth, with whom men were at war, but with whom heaven from the testimony of their own consciences was at peace. This tracing the origin of our flag is

of somewhat similar character to the expression of New York's crazy poet, Macdonald Clarke, when he said:

“Night threw her sable mantle o'er the earth
And pinned it with a star.”

The suffering, the courage, the piety, the undaunted fortitude of the Covenanter have to this day endeared him to the minds of all conversant with his lofty character and his noble mission of steadfastness, and that the romance of his history should be in a measure intertwined with the legends entertained of our flag's origin is not to be wondered at. If it were asked what is the meaning of our flag, could there be any more correct or appropriate answer given than that it means just what Concord and Lexington meant, that after all is said on the subject nothing can be said fuller than is contained in the glorious revolutionary war and its addendum of the no less glorious Union war—which first meant the rising up of a young and mettlesome people against an old and villainous tyranny, and latterly the preservation of all that was formerly won for life and liberty, and happiness among them.

In solemn assemblage our fathers had issued to the world that glorious manifesto, “The Declaration of Independence.” A little later, that the fundamental principles of liberty might have the best organization, they gave to this land our imperishable constitution. Our flag means then all that our fathers meant in the Revolutionary war; it means all that the Declaration of Independence meant; it means all that the constitution of our people, organized for justice, for liberty and for happiness, meant. Our flag carries American ideas, American history and American feelings. Beginning with the colonies, and coming down to our time, in its sacred heraldry, in its glorious insignia, it has gathered and stored chiefly this supreme idea: “Divine right of liberty in man.” Every color means liberty; every thread means liberty; every form of star and beam, or stripe of light, means liberty, not lawlessness; not license, but organized constitutional liberty. Our national flag is the safeguard of liberty. Not an atom of crown is allowed to go into its insignia. Not a symbol of authority in the ruler or chief executive, the President of the United States, is, or ever will be permitted to go into it. *It was an ordinance of liberty, by the people, of the people, and for the people.* THAT it meant, THAT it means, *and by the blessing of God, that it shall mean to the end of time.*

And sacred with the names of the dead,
 Its stars are the symbol of union,
 In union they ever shall wave,
 Its white is the emblem of honor,
 Its red is the blood of the brave.

Success to the flag of our union,
 Let it stream o'er the land and the sea,
 The shades of our heroes are round it,
 Beneath it, the ranks of the free.

Let us swear we will ever defend it,
 In the trials to come, as of yore,
 Lift it high, a broad beacon of freedom,
 To the world, until time is no more.

The history of this glorious banner is all on the side of liberty. Under it rode Washington and his armies. Before it Burgoyne laid down his arms. It waved on the highlands at West Point, and when Benedict Arnold, the traitor, would have surrendered our valuable fortresses and precious legacies, his night was turned to day, and his treachery was driven away by the beams of light from our starry banner. It cheered our army, driven out from around New York, and in their painful pilgrimage through New Jersey. It streamed in golden light over the soldier's heads at Valley Forge and at Morristown. It crossed the icy waters of the Delaware at Trenton, and when its stars gleamed in the cold morning with victory, a new day of hope dawned on the despondency of this nation, and when at length those long seven years of war were drawing to a close, underneath the folds of the old starry banner sat Washington, while Cornwallis surrendered his hosts at Yorktown, and our Revolutionary struggle ended with victory. It waved thus over that whole historic period of victory. It cheered the hearty pioneers of the West in all their desperate encounters with the savage Indian. It was to them not only a symbol bespeaking lofty enterprise, but a comfort visible and within their reach. Our States grew up under it, and when our ships began to swarm upon the ocean, carrying our commerce in their capacious depths to foreign shores; inspired by the genial flame of liberty, it carried forth with them our ideas of liberty, and when Great Britain arrogantly demanded her "*right*" of search upon and within American decks, then up like lightning went that flag again, to her meaning more than mere empty

bravado, as she found to her cost, while every star shone out liberty, and every stripe streamed defiance.

Who has forgotten the gallant fleet of Lake Erie, with its lion-hearted commander, Commodore Perry? The thunders that echoed to either shore were responded to by shouts from beneath that fluttering ensign which begat them. Those men who went forth in the old ship, "Constitution," carried it at their mast-head to battle and to victory. Bless the name! Bless the ship and her historic memory!

The Perrys, the Lawrences, the Biddles, the McDonoughs, the Porters, and a host of others, whose names can never die, fought under the old flag, for liberty, justice and equality.

What precious associations then cluster around our flag? Not only have our fathers set up this banner in the name of God over the well-won battle fields of the Revolution, and over the cities and towns which they rescued from despotic rule; but think also where their descendents have carried it, and raised it in conquest or protection. Through what clouds of smoke and dust has it passed? What storms of shot or shell? What scenes of fire and blood? Not alone at Saratoga, at Monmouth, and at Yorktown, but at Lundey's Lane and New Orleans, at Buna Vista and Chepultapec. It is the same glorious old flag which inscribed with the dying words of Lawrence, "*Don't give up the ship,*" was hoisted on Lake Erie by Commodore Perry, just on the eve of his great naval victory; the same old flag which our lamented chieftain, Gen. Scott, bore in triumph to the proud city of the Aztecs, and planted upon the heights of her national palace. Brave hands raised it above the eternal regions of ice in the Arctic seas, and set it upon the summit of the lofty mountains in the distant West. Where has it not gone, the pride of its friends and the terror of its foes? What countries and what seas has it not visited? Where has not the American citizen been able to stand beneath its guardian folds and defy the world? With what joy and pride seamen and tourists have gazed upon its stars and stripes, read in it the history of their nation's glory; received from it the full sense of security, and drawn from it the inspiration of patriotism and duty?

By it how many have sworn fealty to their country. What bursts of magnificent eloquence has it called forth from Webster, from Everett, and from others too numerous to mention? What lyric strains of poetry from Drake, Holmes, and others? How many heroes its folds have covered in death? How many for it have lived? How many

for it have died? How many living and dying have said in their enthusiastic devotion to its honor, like that young wounded sufferer in the streets of Baltimore, "Oh! the flag! the Stars and Stripes!"

"Call it not vain! They do not err
Who say that when the *Hero* dies
Mute nature mourns her worshipper
And celebrates his obsequies."

Wherever that flag has gone it has been the herald of a better day. It has been the pledge of freedom, of justice, of order, of civilization, and of Christianity. Tyrants only have hated it, and the enemies of mankind have trampled it to earth. All who sigh for the triumphs of truth and righteousness, love and honor it. How glorious and shining then is alike its sign and destiny? In all the world there is not such another flag, that carries within its ample folds such grandeur of hope, such soul-inspiring emanations of hope as our dear old American flag, made by and for liberty, nourished in its spirit and carried in its service its priceless value cannot be estimated.

The Hon. Joel R. Poinsett, a native of South Carolina, and one of her most gifted sons, during the later part of the Administration of John Quincy Adams, represented the United States at the Capitol of Mexico, which was then much distracted by internal dissensions. While Mr. Poinsett resided there, the city was captured by one of the contending factions, and he and his family incurred no small degree of personal danger from the violence of the soldiers, by whom they were suspected of affording concealment to certain obnoxious individuals. In the height of the nullification controversy after his return, in an address delivered to the people of Charleston; the following eloquent passage occurs :

"Wherever I have been, I have been proud of being a citizen of this great republic, and, in the remotest corners of the earth, have walked erect and secure under that banner which our opponents would tear down and trample under foot. I was in Mexico when that city was taken by assault. The house of the American Ambassador was then, as it ought to be, the refuge of the distressed and persecuted; it was pointed out to the infuriated soldiery as a place filled with their enemies. They rushed to the attack. My only defense was the flag of my country, and it was flung out at the instant that hundreds of muskets were levelled at us. Mr. Mason and myself placed ourselves

beneath its waving folds. We did not blanch, for we felt strong in the protecting arm of the mighty republic. We told them that the flag that waved over us was the banner of that nation to whose example they owed their liberty, and to whose protection they were indebted for their safety. The scene changed as by enchantment, and the same men who were on the point of attacking my house and menacing the inhabitants cheered the flag of our country, and placed sentinals to protect it from outrage. 'Fellow citizens, in such a moment as that, would it have been any protection to me and mine to have proclaimed myself a Carolinian? Should I have been here to tell you this tale, if I had hung out the Palmetto and the single star?' BE ASSURED THAT TO BE RESPECTED ABROAD, WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR PLACE IN THE UNION!"

Our flag was never on all the earth made to stoop to despotism. Never, did I say? Alas! Yes once. Only to that worst of despotism slavery has it bowed. But the bitterness of that long deadly strife is over, and its animosities may well be consigned to forgetfulness.

In this Centennial Year of our Republic an era of good feeling and forgiveness should, in common, with the great pulse of the American people, pervade all our hearts. The flag of Fort Sumpter, which went down in sorrow and shame, has long since gone back to its rightful place in power.

When our banner went down, with its ancient renown,
 Betrayed and degraded by treason,
 Did they think as it fell what a passion would swell
 Our hearts when we asked them the reason?

Altho' causeless the blow that at Sumpter laid low,
 That flag, it was freed for the morrow;
 And a thousand more flew for the one that fell true
 As traitors have found to their sorrow.

'Twas in flashes of flame, it was brought to a shame,
 'Till then unrecorded in story,
 But in flashes as bright it rose to our sight,
 And floated o'er Sumpter in glory.

In a speech delivered at the great Union meeting, in 1861, by the late Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *New York Times*, he stated that during the attack on Fort Sumpter a report came to him that

the flag on the morning after the fight was half-mast. He asked Major Anderson, the gallant hero of Sumpter, (peace be to his memory), if that report was true, and he replied there was not a word of truth in it. He said that during the firing one of the halyards was shot away and the flag in consequence dropped down a few feet. The rope caught in the staff and could not be reached, so that the flag could not be either lowered or hoisted, and, said the Major, "*God Almighty nailed that flag to the flag-staff, and I could not have lowered it if I had tried.*"

The South, during the rebellion, used their several State flags. In March, 1861, the Confederate Congress adopted the so-called "stars and bars," composed of three horizontal bars of equal width, the middle one white, the others red, with a blue union containing nine white stars arranged in a circle. The resemblance of this to the "Stars and Stripes" led to confusion and mistakes in the field, and, in September, 1861, a battle flag was adopted, a red field charged with a blue saltier, with a narrow border of white, on which were displayed thirteen white stars. In 1863 the "Stars and Bars" were supplanted by a flag with a white field, having the battle flag for a union. The flag of 1863 was found deficient in service, it being liable to be taken for a flag of truce; and on February 4th, 1865, the outer half of the field beyond the union was covered with a vertical red bar. This was the last flag of the Confederacy.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of the Confederate flag, we are told, seemed not altogether unconscious of the influence of the stars and stripes upon the national sentiment, and in their report thus ingeniously attempted to weaken it. The report says: "Whatever attachment may be felt, from association, for the 'stars and stripes' (an attachment, which your committee may be permitted to say, they do not all share), it is manifest that in inaugurating a new government we cannot," said the committee, "retain the flag of the government from which we have withdrawn with any propriety or without encountering very obvious practical difficulties. There is no propriety in retaining the ensign of a government which, in the opinion of the States composing this Confederacy, had become so oppressive and injurious to their interests as to require their separation from it. It is idle to talk of keeping the flag of the United States when we have voluntarily seceded from them. It is superfluous to dwell upon the practical difficulties which would flow from the fact

of two distinct and probably hostile governments both employing the same or very similar flags. It would be a political and military solicism. It would produce endless confusion and mistakes. It would lead to perpetual disputes as to the glories of the old flag. We must bear in mind that the battles of the Revolution, about which our fondest and proudest memories cluster, were *not* fought beneath its folds; and that although in more recent times in the war of 1812, and in the war of Mexico, the South did win her fair share of glory, and shed her full measure of blood under its guidance and in its defence, we think the impartial page of history will preserve and commemorate the fact more imperishably than a mere piece of striped bunting. When the Colonies achieved their independence of the Mother-country, which, up to the heart they fondly called her, they did not desire to retain the British flag or any thing at all similar to it. Yet under that flag they had been planted and matured. Under that flag they had fought in their infancy for their very existence against more than one determined foe. Under it they had repelled the relentless savage, and carried it further and further into the decreasing wilderness as the standard of civilization and religion. Under it the youthful Washington won his spurs in the memorable and unfortunate expedition of Braddock; and Americans helped to plant it on the heights of Abraham, where the immortal Wolfe fell, covered with glory, in the arms of victory. But our forefathers, when they separated themselves from Great Britain (a separation not on account of their hatred of the English Constitution, or of English institutions, but in consequence of the tyrannical and unconstitutional rule of Lord North's administration), and because their destiny beckoned them on to independent expansion and achievements, cast no lingering, regretful looks behind. They were proud of their race and lineage, proud of their heritage in the glories and genius and language of old England, but they were influenced by the spirit of the motto of the great Hampden: *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*. They were determined to build up a new power among the nations of the world. They therefore did not attempt 'to keep the old flag.' We think it good to imitate them in this comparatively *little matter*, as well as to emulate them in greater and more important ones."

The committee therefore recommended a new flag for the Confederate States, which was adopted. This consisted of a red field with a white space extending horizontally through the centre and equal in

width to one-third the width of the flag, the red spaces above and below being the same width as the white. The Union blue extended down through the white space but terminated at the lower red one. In the blue were the stars corresponding in number to the States in the Confederacy. The three colors—red, white and blue are the true republican colors. “In heraldry they are emblematic of the three great virtues, valor, purity, truth,” reported the committee, while they added, “the colors contrast admirably and are lasting.”

Under our starry banner we can with perfect safety roam to the uttermost parts of the earth; if we go to Constantinople and a mob should threaten us, that banner shines like lightning out of heaven and we are safe. If we go to Africa’s sunny clime and skirt its coasts, the colors of our country when exhibited make us safe.

In England, France or Russia, an American citizen, under the protection of the American flag, is safe. It has found on the wide ocean, in the Indian Islands, in Sumatra, in Japan, in China, and in all the world no enemies, either barbarian or civilized, that dared to touch it with their polluted hands, and all nations recognize that the United States, under its starry banner, throws the shield of its protection over the humblest and weakest of its people, and vindicates the rights of the poor and powerless as faithfully as those of the rich and powerful—that under its frank and fearless guidance and protection naturalized citizens must be protected abroad, and at every hazard and sacrifice, as though they were native born. Our flag speaks in living tones of thunder and says, “The nation whose symbol I am are foreigners or the descendants of foreigners; their fathers established by arms their right to be called a nation. It remains for it to establish the right to welcome to its shores all who are willing, by oath of allegiance, to become American citizens. Perpetual allegiance, as claimed abroad, is only another name for perpetual bondage, and would make all slaves to the soil where first they saw the light. The national cemeteries prove how faithfully these oaths of fidelity to their adopted land have been sealed in the life blood of thousands. Should it not then be faithless to the dead if it did not protect their living brethren in the full enjoyment of that nationality for which, side by side with the native born, its soldiers of foreign birth laid down their lives.” All honor and praise to the brave boys in blue, whether native or foreign born, who marched to the sound of the drum and shrill notes of the fife, and carried the old flag, bearing every one of its stars and stripes

and all its insignia into our national capital, until Washington seemed a very forest in which every tree supported the American flag, and when that was done, throughout the length and breadth of the land, every loyal heart uttered the prayer. God bless the brave men that went forth from home to save from shame and disgrace our national flag, bequeathed us by our fathers! Thank God, the Union is saved, never to be destroyed!

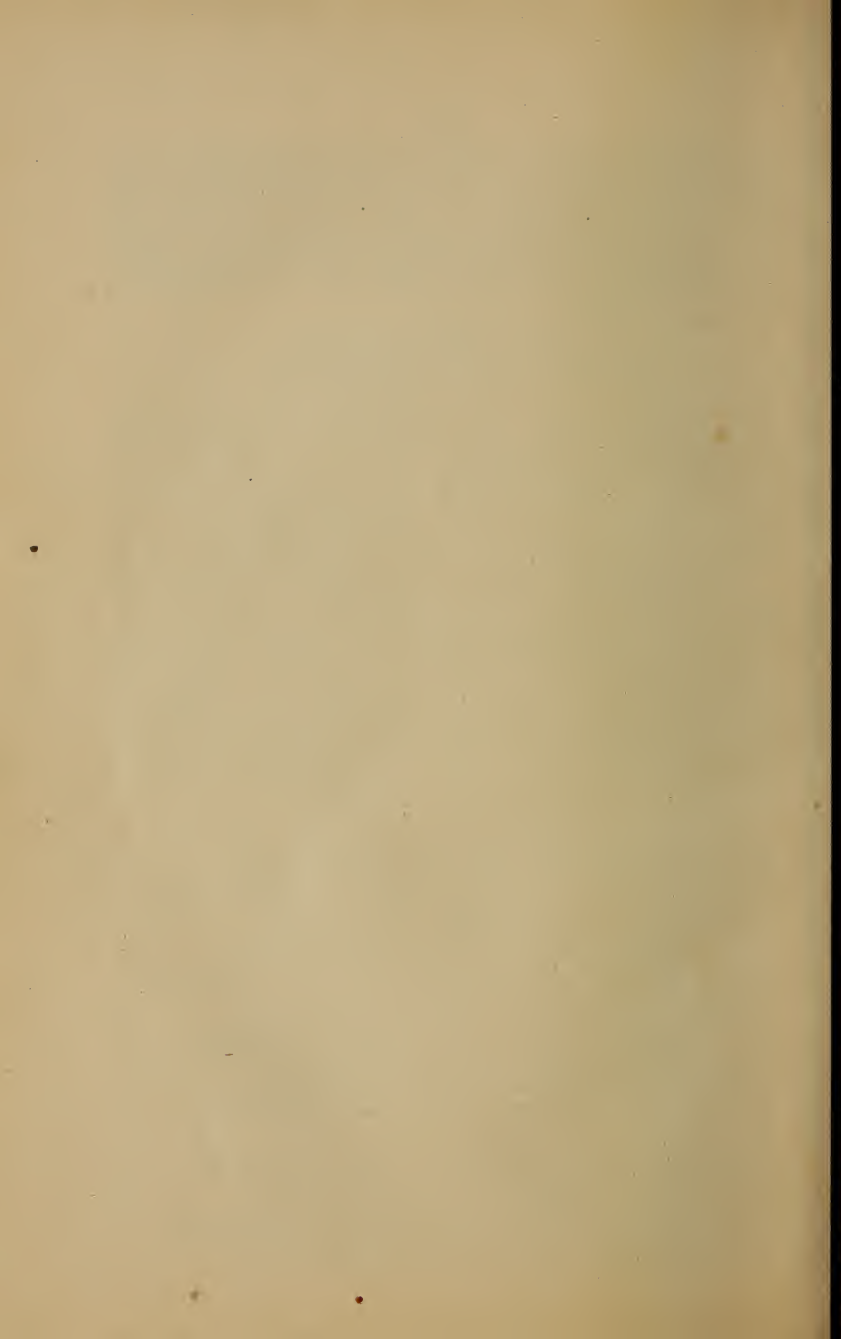
“Success to the flag of our nation,
Its folds all around us be spread!
Emblazoned with deeds of the valiant,
And crowned with acts of the dead.”

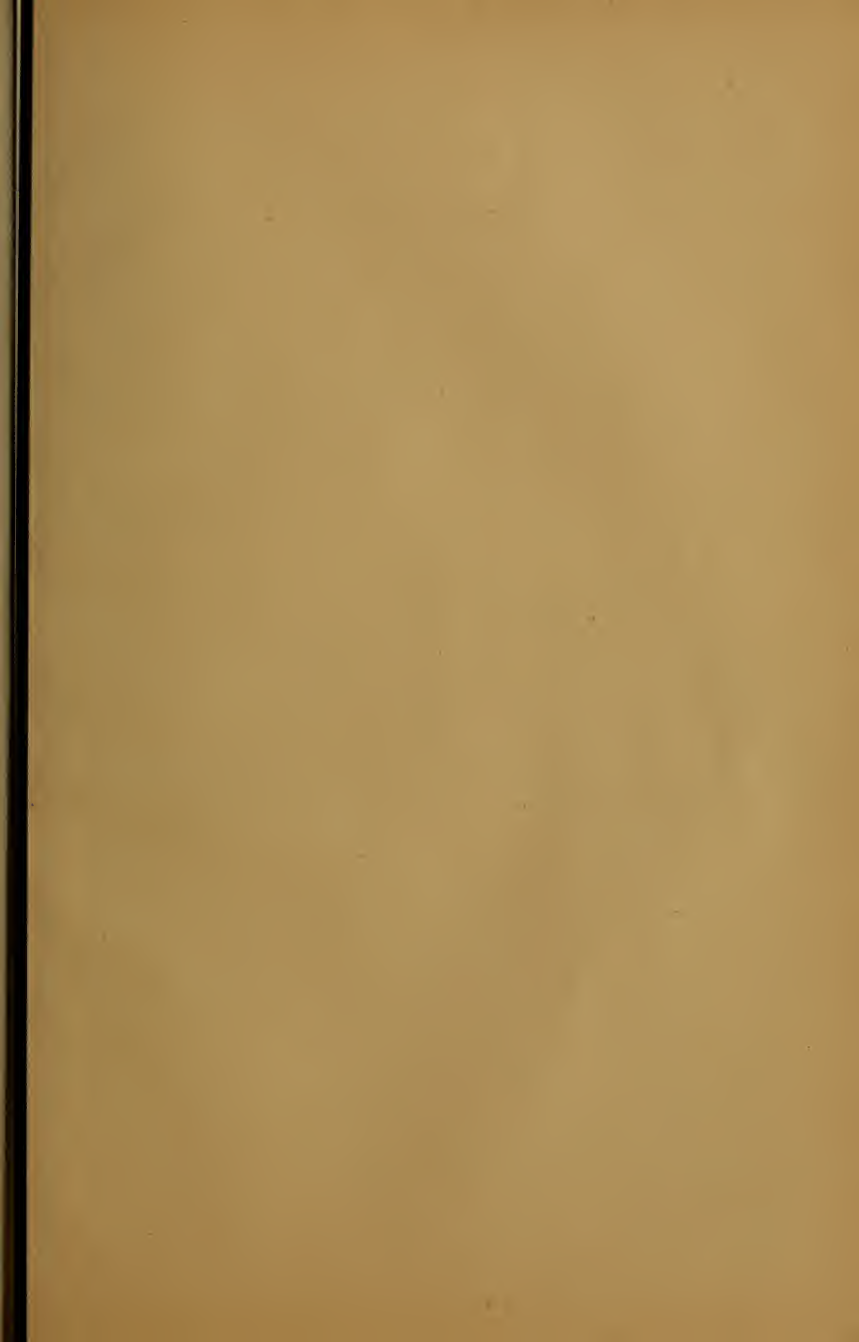
Thank God, we can say, in the language of the immortal Webster, in his speech concerning the Union—one of the noblest passages that ever issued from the uninspired lips or pen of man—“When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see it shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent, and on a land rent with civil feuds or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood. Let this last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as ‘*What is all this worth?*’ nor those other words of delusion and folly, ‘*Liberty first and union afterward,*’ but everywhere spread all over in characters of living light, blazing in all its ample folds as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the heavens, that other sentiment dear to every American heart, ‘*LIBERTY AND UNION, NOW AND FOREVER, ONE AND INSEPARABLE!*’ ”

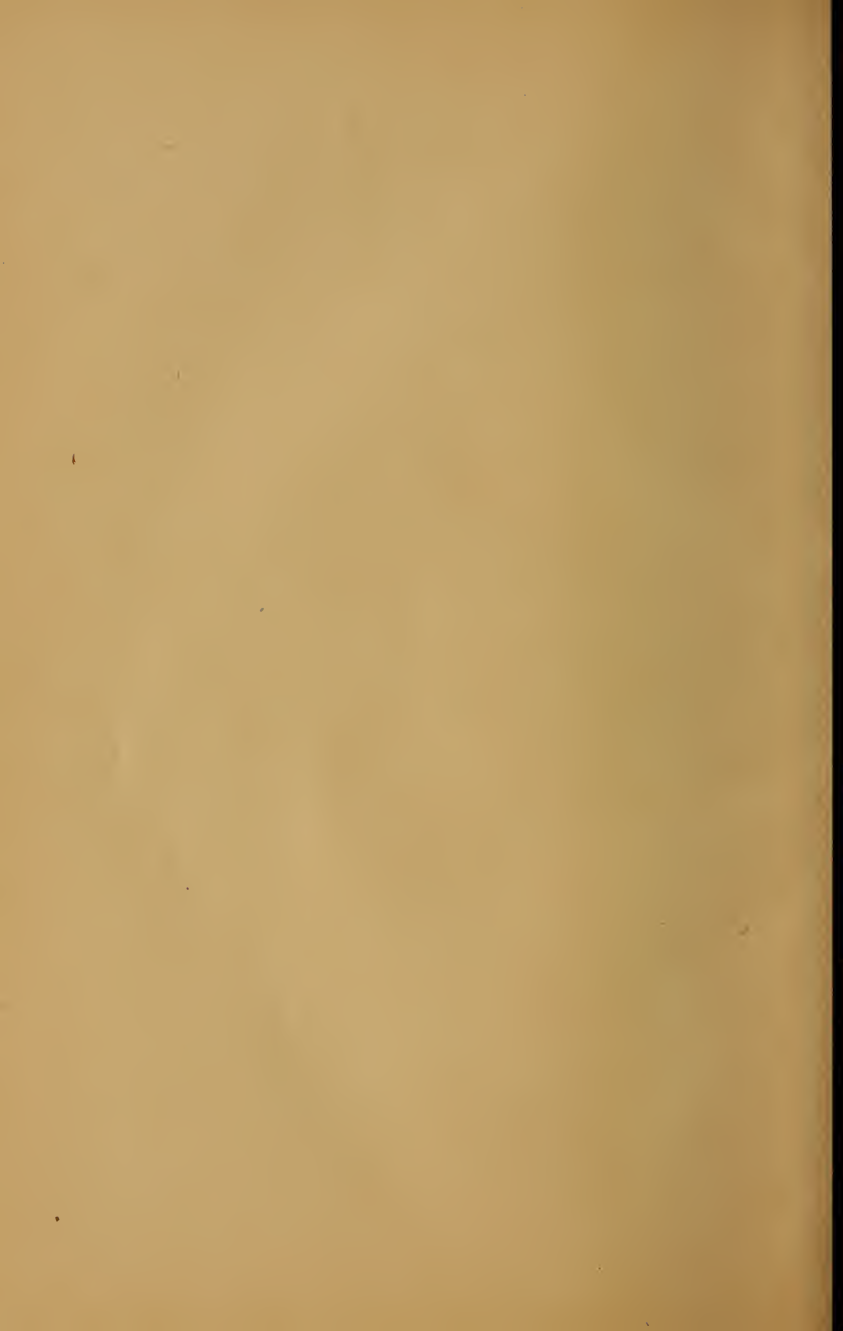
“Dear banner of my native land! ye gleaming silver stars,
Broad, spotless ground of purity, crossed with four azure bars,
Clasped by the hero-father’s hand, watched over in his night,
Through battle hour and day of peace, bright morn and moonless night,
Because within your clustering folds he knew you surely bore
Dear Freedom’s hope for human souls to every sea and shore!
Oh precious flag! beneath whose folds such noble deeds are done,
The Dear Old Flag! the Starry Flag! The Flag of Washington.

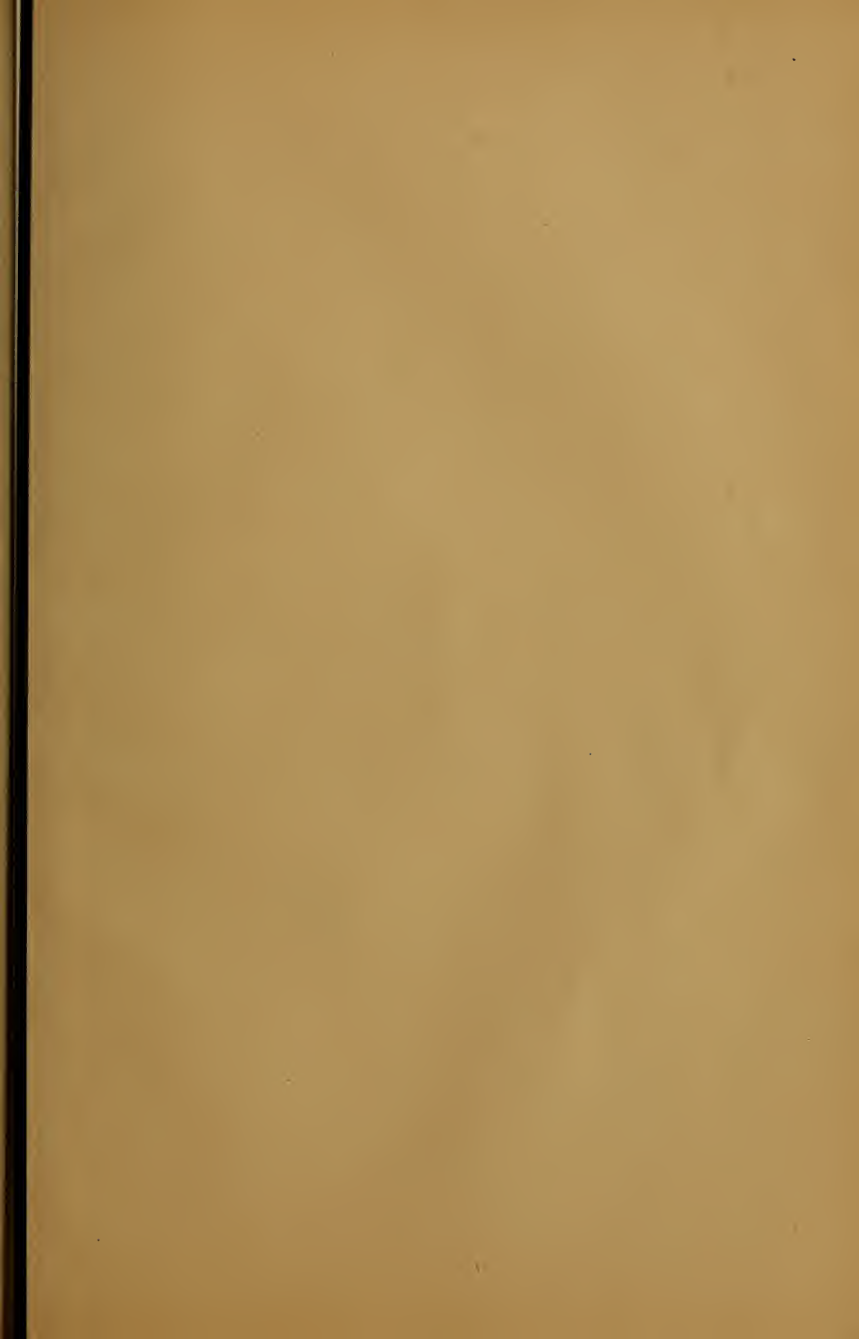
“Unfurl bright stripes! shine forth clear stars! swing outward to the breeze,
Go bear your message to the wilds, go tell it on the seas;
That poor men sit within your shade, and rich men in their pride;
That beggar boys and statesmen’s sons walk ’neath you side by side;
You guard the school-house on the green, the church upon the hill,
And fold your precious blessings round the cabin by the rail;
While weary hearts from every land beneath the shining sun
Find work, and rest, and home, beneath the Flag of Washington.

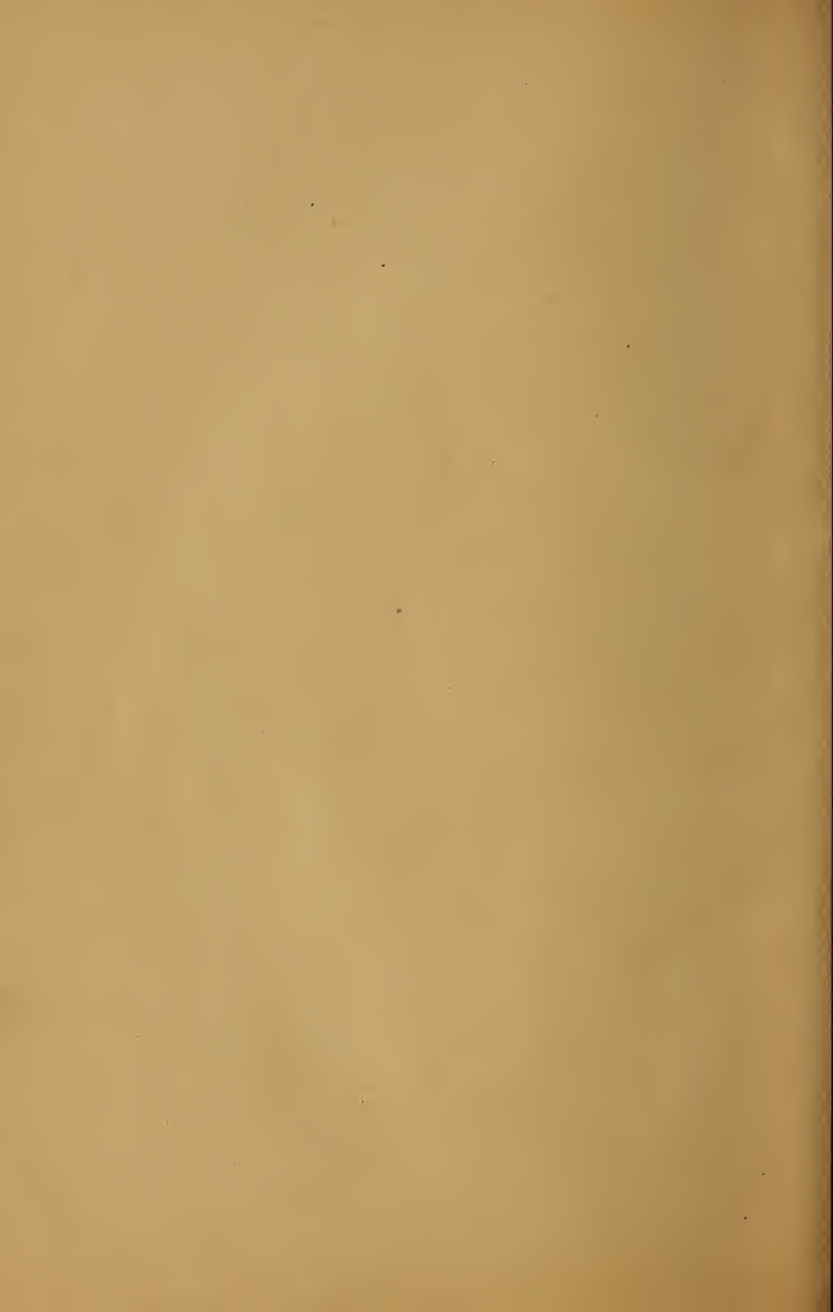
“And never, never on the earth, however brave they be,
Shall friends or foes bear down this great proud standard of the free.
Though they around its staff may pour red blood in rushing waves,
And build beneath its starry folds great pyramids of graves;
For God looks out, with sleepless eye, upon his children’s deeds,
And sees, through all their good and ill, their sufferings and their needs;
And he will watch and he will keep, ’till human rights have won,
The Dear Old Flag! the Starry Flag! the Flag of Washington.”

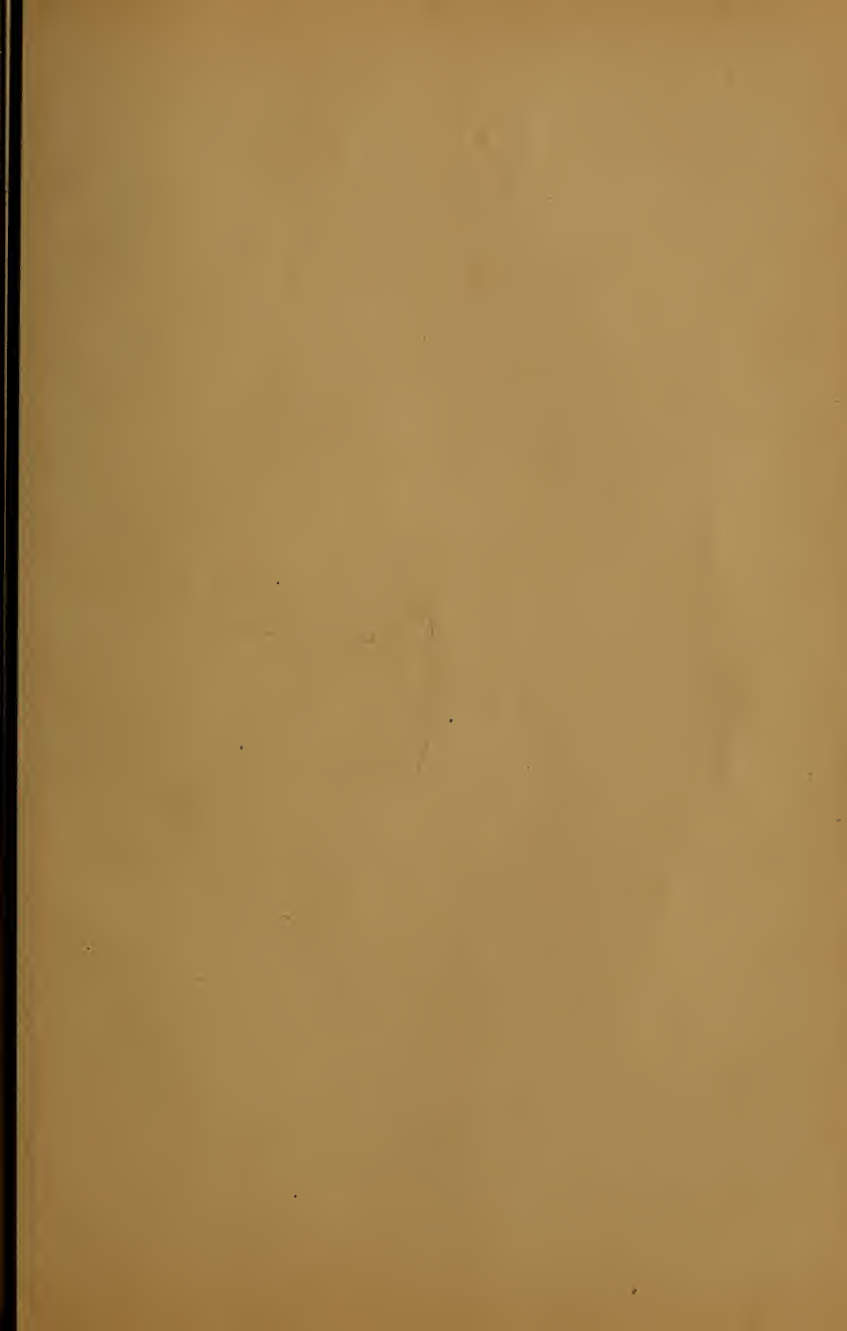




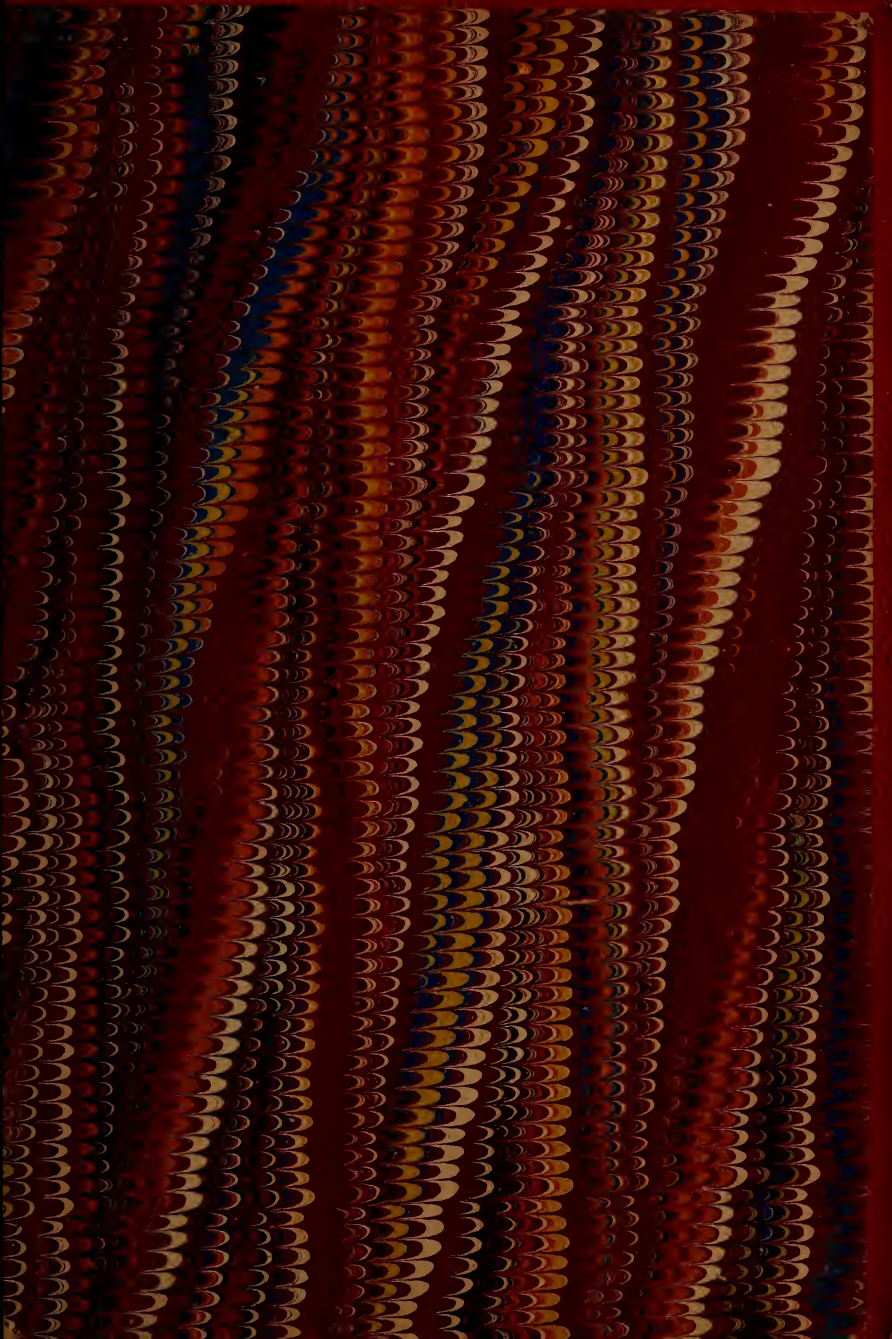












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